



LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

March 09, 2010

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**APPROVE THE ASSIGNMENT OF THE RIGHT TO APPLY
FROM THE CITY OF SOUTH GATE
TO THE WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
FOR THE SOUTH GATE RIPARIAN RESTORATION PROJECT
(FIRST DISTRICT) (3 VOTES)**

SUBJECT

The proposed actions would transfer an existing grant from the City of South Gate to the Watershed Conservation Authority to allow the Watershed Conservation Authority to utilize \$1.5 million in unspent grant funds allocated under the Safe Neighborhood Parks Proposition of 1996 to complete the South Gate Riparian Restoration Project.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Find that the proposed administrative actions are not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as the actions do not meet the definition of a project according to Sections 15378 (b)(4)(5) of the State CEQA Guidelines, because the actions are administrative activities for government grants which by their terms do not involve any commitments to any specific projects which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.
2. Approve the assignment of the right to apply for funds from the City of South Gate to the Watershed Conservation Authority, in the amount of \$1,500,000, allocated under Section (3), Subsection (c), Paragraph (2), Subsection (M) of the Safe Neighborhood Parks Proposition of 1996 for the South Gate Riparian Restoration Project.
3. Authorize the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, in his capacity as Director of

the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District, to award the existing grant to the Watershed Conservation Authority when applicable conditions have been met and to administer the grant as of the date of this action and pursuant to guidelines in the Procedural Guide for Specified, Per Parcel, and Excess Funds Projects (Procedural Guide).

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approval of the recommended actions would allow the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA), a joint powers authority between the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC), and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, to utilize funding allocated under the Safe Neighborhood Parks Proposition of 1996 (1996 Proposition) for the South Gate Riparian Restoration Project.

The WCA recently acquired land located on the north side of Imperial Highway, between the Los Angeles River and Interstate 710 in the First Supervisorial District. The WCA proposes to develop the property as part of the South Gate Riparian Restoration Project.

The grant was originally awarded to the City of South Gate (South Gate) in June 2003. The project has since remained in the planning stages as South Gate worked to secure a suitable location. As a result, the entire \$1.5 million in the grant remains unspent.

South Gate has consented to the development of the project on the above WCA-owned land and agreed to transfer the full grant to WCA. Under the proposed project WCA will develop a rest area adjacent to the existing Los Angeles River trail which is consistent with Section (3), Subsection (c), Paragraph (2), Subsection (M) of the 1996 Proposition. The proposed scope includes purchase and installation of benches, shade trees, geographically appropriate California native plants, and interpretive and directional signage along the adjacent trail.

The total project cost is currently estimated at \$2,000,000. The WCA will supplement the \$1,500,000 in the funds from the 1996 Proposition with \$500,000 from the RMC.

It is also recommended that the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation (Director) be authorized to award the grant to the WCA when applicable conditions have been met, such as grantee qualifications, consistency between the projects and requirements of the 1996 Proposition, and grantee agreement with CEQA requirements for the project, and to administer the grant pursuant to the Procedural Guide previously approved by your Board.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The recommended actions further the Board approved County Strategic Plan Goals of Operational Effectiveness (Goal 1), and Community and Municipal Services (Goal 3), by enhancing safe and accessible recreational opportunities along the Los Angeles River's west bank in the First Supervisorial District.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Sufficient appropriation for the grant in the amount of \$1,500,000 is budgeted in the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District's Assessment Project Fund (HB4) under

Other Charges.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

If your Board does not approve the recommended actions, South Gate may either proceed with the project as the current grantee, request your Board's approval to fund different new projects with the funds, or relinquish its claim to the funds.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

All public agency projects funded by the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District are required to comply with CEQA as a condition of the grant. The lead agency is responsible for preparing the appropriate environmental documentation for the project. Upon your Board's approval of the recommended actions, the WCA will become the lead agency for the South Gate Restoration Project.

The recommended administrative actions proposed by Regional Park and Open Space District are not subject to CEQA in that the actions do not meet the definition of a project according to Sections 15378 (b)(4)(5) of the State CEQA Guidelines, because the actions are administrative activities for government grants which by their terms do not involve any commitments to any specific projects which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

Grant Project Agreements will be entered into and administered under authority delegated to the Director and pursuant to the Procedural Guide approved by the Board in 2009. The Project Agreement will be approved as to form by County Counsel.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

The recommended actions will have no impact on any other projects funded by the District but are required for the enhancement of safe and accessible recreational opportunities along the Los Angeles River's west bank in the First Supervisorial District.

CONCLUSION

Please instruct the Executive Officer-Clerk of the Board to return one adopted copy of this action to the Chief Executive Office, Capital Projects Division, and to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Russ Guiney", with a stylized, flowing script.

RUSS GUINEY
Director

RG:IV:WRO:LB

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors